



July 8, 2002

USDI Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office

West Douglas Herd Area Planning Bulletin #1

Inside this Bulletin:

Federal Register Notice of Intent	2
Map of West Douglas Herd Area	3
Planning Schedule	4
Preliminary Planning Criteria	5

For more Information:

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Email:
scott_pavey@co.blm.gov

White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

White River Field Office to Amend Its Resource Management Plan Regarding Wild Horses in West Douglas

The Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office recently published a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* (see page 2) to let the public know that they are initiating the process to amend the White River Resource Management Plan regarding management of wild horses in the West Douglas Herd Area (see map on page 3). The purpose of the planning process is to identify the most appropriate strategy for managing wild horses within the herd area while protecting other resource values, providing for multiple uses, and improving the health of public lands.

Currently the Resource Management Plan directs BLM to maintain a herd of up to 50 horses for a period of 10 years (until 2007), and then remove all wild horses from the herd area. Through the amendment planning process BLM will identify and analyze a full range of alternatives and may change this decision.

Publication of the Notice of Intent marked the beginning of the scoping period for this project. The purpose of the scoping period is to identify issues and concerns for consideration during development of the plan amendment. The White River Field Office Staff has already identified several

potential issues. These issues are listed in the federal register notice found on page 2 of this bulletin. The public is also invited to review and provide comments on the planning criteria found on page 5. The scoping period has been extended beyond the dates specified in the Notice of intent. BLM will consider all scoping comments received on or before September 1, 2002. You may send written comments to the White River Field Office at either the postal or email address listed in the lower left corner of this page. In addition, BLM will hold public scoping meetings in August to allow interested parties to voice their concerns in person:

Public Scoping Meetings

August 26 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
BLM White River
Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO

August 28 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Student Center
CNCC Campus
Rangely, CO

August 29 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
BLM
Grand Junction
Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, CO

Notice of Intent as it Appeared in the Federal Register on June 25, 2002

42796

Federal Register / Vol. 67, No. 122 / Tuesday, June 25, 2002 / Notices

be interested in or affected by the BLM decision on the Tracy to Silver Lake Power Line Project are urged to participate in the EIS process. It is important that those interested in the proposed activities participate in the scoping and commenting processes of the EIS. To be most helpful, comments should be as specific as possible.

Dated: May 14, 2002.

John Singlaub,

Manager, Carson City Field Office.

[FR Doc. 02-16005 Filed 6-24-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CO-110-1060-DU]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment and Plan Amendment

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for an Amendment to the White River Resource Management Plan (RMP) Regarding Management of Wild Horses in the West Douglas Herd Area.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), White River Field Office proposes to prepare an EA and consider an amendment to the White River RMP regarding management of wild horses in the West Douglas Herd Area. The purpose of this planning process is to identify the most appropriate strategy for management of wild horses in the West Douglas Herd Area of the White River Resource Area, while protecting resource values, providing for multiple uses, and improving the health of public lands. The planning process will allow BLM, with integrated public involvement, to develop and conduct detailed analysis of a full range of alternatives specifically focused on wild horses and other resources within this herd area. BLM has determined that such detail and focus may not have been sufficiently addressed and documented in the current RMP, which has a resource-area-wide scope. BLM will hold public meetings in Rangely and Grand Junction, CO, to share information and identify specific concerns and issues pertaining to this plan amendment.

DATES: The official public scoping period for this planning effort commences with the publication of this notice. The public is invited to submit scoping comments to the address listed

below until August 26, 2002. BLM will publish exact dates, times, and locations for public meetings through media announcements, internet postings, and mailings at least 15 days in advance of the meetings.

ADDRESSES: Send scoping comments to the White River Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 73544 Hwy 64, Meeker, CO 81641, or e-mail scott_pavey@co.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The West Douglas Herd Area is located in Rio Blanco County, within the southwestern portion of the White River Resource Area in Northwestern Colorado. It contains 123,390 acres of public, and 4,754 acres of private land. The herd area also encompasses Texas and Oil Spring Mountains; portions of Douglas, Missouri, and Texas Creek Watersheds; a portion of the Oil Springs Mountain Wilderness Study Area; and a portion of the Canyon Pintado National Historic District.

BLM invites the public to identify issues that they feel should be addressed during the planning process. Thus far, BLM has identified the following preliminary issues:

Issue 1: Wild Horse Management. Have all reasonable management options been considered and analyzed? Do management alternatives meet statutory requirements?

Issue 2: Wilderness. Can wild horse management activities and wilderness values within Oil Spring Mountain Wilderness Study Area co-exist?

Issue 3: Oil and Gas Development. Will there be additional stipulations for oil and gas development? Will oil and gas development cause wild horses to disperse into areas outside of the herd area?

Issue 4: Forage Allocation. What proportions of available forage should be allocated to livestock, wild horses, and wildlife?

Public participation will be an essential component of this planning process. Anyone wishing to be placed on the BLM mailing list for this action should contact the person listed below or mail a letter containing contact information to the White River Field Office (address listed earlier in this notice). BLM will review all comments and take them into consideration when developing the Environmental Assessment and the plan amendment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Scott Pavey, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, White River Field Office (970) 878-3831, E-mail: scott_pavey@co.blm.gov.

Dated: March 25, 2001.

James A. Cagney,
Associate Field Manager.

Editorial Note: This document was received in the Office of the Federal Register on June 20, 2002.

[FR Doc. 02-16010 Filed 6-24-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-JB-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-610-02-1220-AA]

Notice of Public Meeting of the California Desert District Advisory Council

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, in accordance with Public Laws 92-463 and 94-579, that the California Desert District Advisory Council to the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, will meet in formal session on Friday, June 28, 2002, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, June 29, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Barstow Community College, located at 2700 Barstow Road, Barstow, California.

Agenda items for the Council meeting will include the following topics:

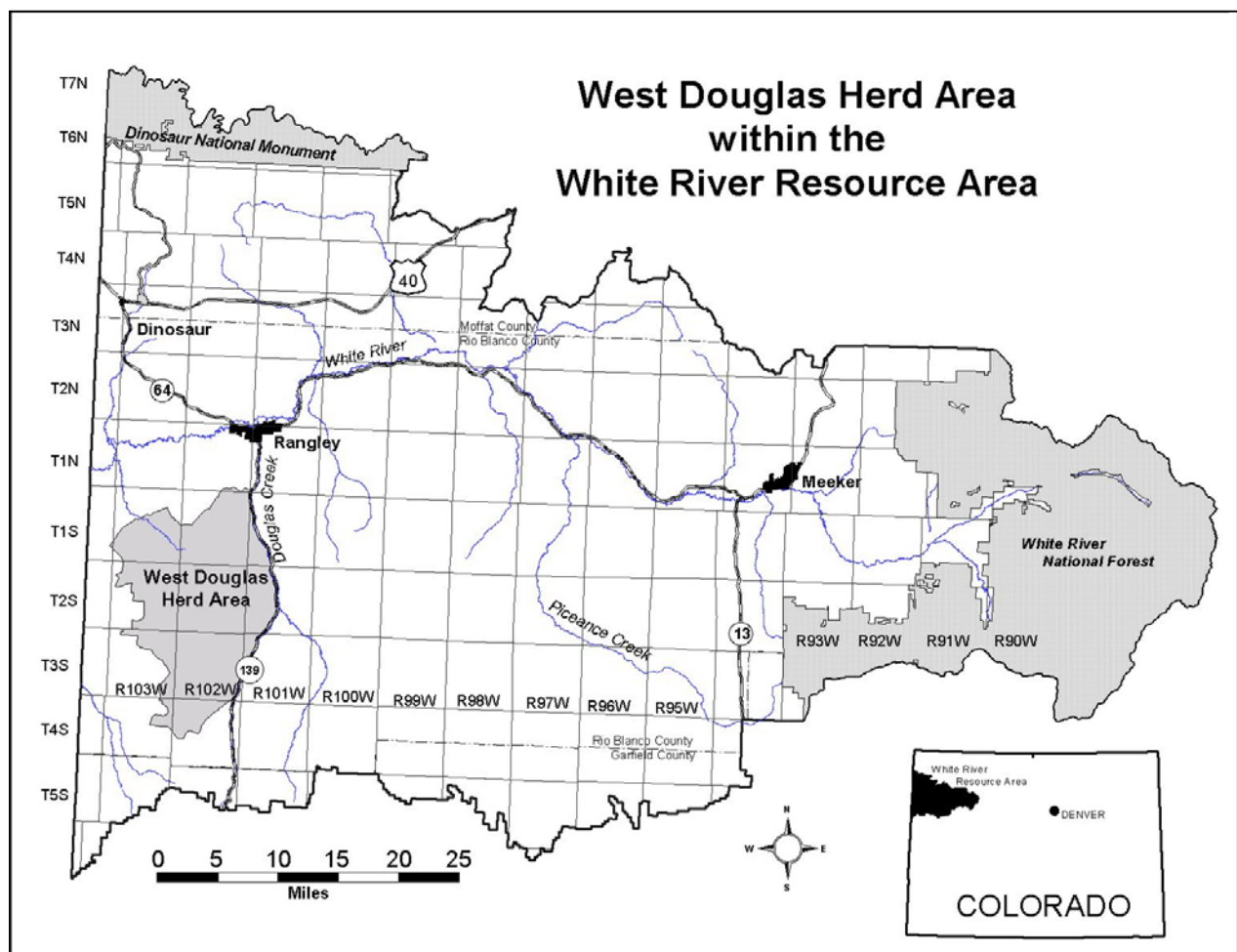
- Review of District Advisory Council charter, Council role and function
- Election of Officers
- Public Comment for items not on the agenda (Friday morning)
- Overview and update on the West Mojave Plan
- Status report on current District Planning efforts: Northern and Eastern Colorado Plan, Northern and Eastern Mojave Plan, Draft BLM Coachella Valley Plan Amendment—
- Environmental Impact Statement, Draft Western Colorado Plan, Draft Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Resource Management Plan
- Plan Implementation strategies and priorities
- Council involvement in future Districtwide projects
- Public comment (Saturday afternoon)
- Select future Council meeting date(s), location(s), and agenda topics

All Desert District Advisory Council meetings are open to the public. Time for public comment is scheduled at the beginning of the meeting for topics not on the agenda, and will be made available by the Council Chairman during the presentation of various agenda items. Time for public comment is also scheduled at the end of the meeting.

Written comments may be filed in advance of the meeting for the

Where is the West Douglas Herd Area?

The West Douglas Herd Area is located in Northwestern Colorado, southwest of the town of Rangely. It is approximately 50 miles north of Grand Junction. Its eastern boundary is State Highway 139, which runs south from Rangely to Interstate 70.



Tentative Schedule for the planning process

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
06/25/02	Notice of Intent published in <i>Federal Register</i> Begin Public Scoping Period
07/09/02	Bulletin #1 Distributed Public review of Planning Criteria
8/26/02	Public Scoping Meeting in Meeker, CO
8/28/02	Public Scoping Meeting in Rangely, CO
8/29/02	Public Scoping Meeting in Grand Junction, CO
11/02 – 12/02	White River Staff analyzes management situation
12/02 – 02/03	White River Staff formulates alternatives and develops Proposed Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment
03/03	Proposed Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment issued for 30-day public review. Public meetings (exact dates, times, and locations will be published in future bulletins and local newspapers)
05/03	Finalize Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment incorporating changes as need, from public comments Governor's 60-day Consistency Review Begin 30-day public protest period
07/03	Resolve protests Prepare Decision Record
09/03	Amendment approved by State Director

Note: Six-digit dates are month/day/year. Two-digit dates are month/year.

Preliminary Planning Criteria

During its initial internal planning sessions, the White River BLM Staff developed the preliminary planning criteria listed below. Planning criteria establish constraints, guidelines, and standards for the planning process. They help to define the scope of the process, and estimate the extent of data collection and analysis. BLM may modify these preliminary criteria based on public comments. You may send written comments, before September 1, 2002, to either the postal or email address listed at the right.

Send Comments to:

Postal Address:

**Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
ATTN: Scott Pavey
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641**

Email Address:

scott_pavey@co.blm.gov

Preliminary Planning Criteria Developed by the White River BLM Staff:

1. The planning area is defined as the public and private lands within, or immediately adjacent to the West Douglas Herd Area as specified in the White River Resource Management Plan.
2. All alternatives (with the exception of continued current management) must comply with the Wild and Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act and 43 CFR Part 4700.
3. Management of Wild Horses will not cause excessive harm to the thriving natural ecological balance (TNEB). As a result of this RMP amendment, the planning area will meet public land health standards or move toward meeting the standards from the current situation.
4. Data analysis will include an evaluation of herd genetic viability.
5. BLM must be able to accomplish the actions required by the plan amendment utilizing current and foreseeable future fiscal and human resources.
6. The planning process will determine forage allocation within the planning area for wild horses, livestock, and wildlife.
7. The Environmental Assessment will include an analysis of capture techniques that may be used to gather wild horses from within or adjacent to the herd area in the future.
8. Current vegetative assessments for the planning area are valid and no additional vegetative inventory will be necessary.
9. The Environmental Assessment will include an economic and fiscal impact analysis.
10. Decisions in the White River Resource Management Plan regarding management of the Oil Springs Mountain Wilderness Study Area for wilderness character and values remain applicable.
11. The Reasonable Foreseeable Development scenario found in the 1997 White River Proposed Resource Management Plan remains valid and will be used for analysis.